

Historical Preconditions of Formation of the Concept “Intermarium” in the Face of Contemporary Challenges

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The article analyzes the main vectors of foreign policy of the Ukrainian state: the Eurasian, European, South-East. It focuses on the development of the South-East geopolitical areas through practical implementation of the concept “Intermarium” in the face of increasing international calls. The idea of creating a Baltic-black sea Union was supported by a number of Ukrainian and foreign figures: the Josef Pilsudski Siegfried Marocs Hrushevsky, Andrei Sinyavsky, Tadeusz Golovko, Wladyslaw Sikorski, Jaroslaw Kaczynski and other. It is noted that the implementation of the project “Intermarium” will have a significant geopolitical, economic and socio-cultural benefits.

Keywords: geopolitics; Baltic-Black Sea Union; Intermarium; Ukrainian state

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In the face of increasing international challenges, in the face of Russian expansion, the proliferation of ideas of “Russian world”, is actualized question regarding the revision of the European countries and their security strategies. The occupation and annexation of Crimea by Russia, the destabilization of Eastern Ukraine initiated by Russia, has revived the trend of a stronger collective defense in Europe under the NATO umbrella. It should be noted that in the current circumstances, NATO remains the main guarantor of security in Europe. At the conclusion of the German Institute for international and security Affairs, as the conflict in Ukraine has exacerbated NATO, just as it has weakened the security policy and defence of the EU. Quite a long time, European countries have underestimated the threat from the Russian Federation. They were convinced that Russia is a democratic country and it is possible to agree. However, the events of recent years have shown that the Russian authorities are trying to revive the Imperial grandeur of Russia and uses any means, often ignoring the rules of

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European and international legislation. Abkhazia, Pridnestrovie (Transdnistria), the Crimea showed the world that Russia is around it creates hot zones that seeks to influence neighboring States, keeping them in suspense. This can only oppose the common position of the European countries and the world community who would have condemned and opposed such behavior of Russia.

However, even among the countries of the European Union, which support economic sanctions against Russia, there are certain supporters of it. Nevertheless, knowing all the threats, the European countries-NATO members willing to increase spending on security and defense within NATO. At the same time, the U.S.A. continues to consider himself a powerful European player, and directly cooperate with European partners on security issues.

The policy of Russia has forced NATO to reconsider its strategy and focus on strengthening the military power and the concentration of forces on the Eastern borders to respond adequately to Russia's actions. “Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine fundamentally change our vision of the whole of Europe”, — stated in the Declaration of the NATO Summit in Wales on 5 September 2014. In response to the challenges posed by Russia, approved the Plan of NATO preparedness, which foresaw a permanent presence and significant military activity of NATO in Eastern Europe, the establishment of a joint high readiness forces (VJTF), provision of defense expenditures no less than 2% of GDP, the development of multinational corps “North-East”, the base of the Center of excellence for strategic communication of NATO in Latvia. At the same time, the Alliance stated that it did not seek confrontation and leaves open the possibility for political dialogue with Russia.

One aspect of countering Russian expansion is the study and implementation of a geopolitical concept “Intermarium”, which will contribute to the formation of a powerful political Alliance of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic, etc.). In the current geopolitical situation, this could be an extremely valuable initiative. A strong Alliance of independent States Central and Eastern Europe would be an adequate response to the aggressive expansion of the Eurasian Empire which is a threat for all Europe, but especially for Ukraine, because the Russian geopolitics are trying to deny the existence of an independent Ukrainian state, focusing on the fact that her appearance was coincidental. The chief ideologist of the “Russian world” Aleksandr Dugin notes:

“the Existence of Ukraine in its current borders, modern status of “sovereign state” is equivalent to the problem of the terrible blow to the geopolitical security of Russia, tantamount to invasion of its territory. The continued existence of the unitary Ukraine is unacceptable. This area should be divided into several zones, in accordance with geopolitical and ethno-cultural realities. “Ukraine's sovereignty is such a negative phenomenon for Russian geopolitics that, in principle, easily provoke an armed conflict. (...) ...the existence of “sovereign Ukraine” is on the geopolitical level, by declaring Russia a geopolitical war”.” [Dugin, 1997: 243-245].

Consequently, the Russian Federation directs all efforts to keep Ukraine in its sphere of influence and achieve dominance in Central and Eastern Europe. In this context, yet Zbigniew Brzezinski noted that the Russian Federation without Ukraine could not become an Empire. Therefore, the international community under any circumstances should not allow Russia to achieve domination in Central and Eastern Europe.

Analyzing the historical aspects of the issue, it should be noted that the concept “Intermarium” has begun to develop and implement at the beginning of 20th century, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Polish researchers and policy makers. For the first time, the Treaty establishing the Baltic-Black Sea Union was signed in August 1919, at the conference at Riga. Signatures under the document were put by the delegation of Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Estonia, Polish and Ukrainian representatives.

Although it should be stressed that the idea of forming a Union of Poland, Lithuania and the Ukrainian lands appeared in the 17th century during the national liberation of the Ukrainian people. Thus, the Ukrainian political scientist Yuri Nemyrych supported Pro-Polish orientation of Hetman Ivan Vyhovsky and advocated the creation of a Federation of the Polish Crown, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Grand Duchy of the Russian. Yuri Nemyrych together with Pavel Teterya was one of the originators of the Treaty of Hadiach in 1658, where he was prescribed these ideas. Under this Treaty, Ukrainian lands would get their own government (Council), Hetman, Chancellor, the judiciary, the Treasury, the army (30 thousand Cossacks and 10 thousand mercenaries); overturned the action of the Union of Brest. Actively to develop Ukrainian culture was provided free printing, designed another Academy, in addition to Mohyla, the planned opening of a large number of schools with free teaching. To implement this brilliant plan failed through a wide anti-Polish sentiment in Ukraine, the contradictory position of Warsaw and Moscow’s pressure.

At the beginning of the 20th century, a significant contribution to the development of the countries of the “Intermarium” was made head of the foreign Ministry of Latvia Siegfried Maierovits. The program included plans for the defense of the Union, integration of economic systems, the joint banking and monetary policy, the political agreement on mutual support and a common foreign policy, providing a clear path from the Baltic to the Black sea.

An active supporter of the Baltic-Black Sea Union was Jozef Pilsudski. The first Marshal of Poland knew that the safety of his country depends heavily on an Alliance of strong independent States, which had fulfilled the function of “sanitary frontier” between Poland and Russia and could stop the Russian expansion to the West. The aim of Pilsudski was to revive the Commonwealth — a Federation of Poland, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine. The Association of these countries in a single geopolitical Alliance would create Europe’s territorial hardened community. A key element of this Alliance was to become an independent Ukraine. Therefore, the head of the Polish state in the spring of 1920 decided to restore and strengthen independent, friendly to Poland Ukraine and led about negotiating with the leader of the UNR and Petliura. “You should not have any illusions: even if we make peace, we will always remain a target for attacks from Russia,” said Pilsudski in an interview with the newspaper *Kurier Poranny* [Ishchuk, 2015]. The concept of “Intermarium” completed other geopolitical doctrine Pilsudski — Prometheism, that is the idea of the liberation of the Kremlin enslaved peoples and the distribution of Imperial Russia on the sovereign nation-state. Strategic goal of Pilsudski was the formation of a political Alliance of independent countries between the Baltic, Adriatic, Black and Caspian seas. Pilsudski sought to create a Federation of Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Belarus, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, perhaps Finland, which should be based also on the three Caucasian republics — Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia.

Understanding of the common Polish-Ukrainian interests prompted Pilsudski to the development of the Kiev offensive of the Polish-Ukrainian troops against the Bolsheviks. Before the operation starts at Pilsudski was a few scenarios. Most desirable would be to end

with the complete defeat of Bolshevik Russia, but its implementation was only possible if the assistance of an independent Ukrainian state, because without Ukraine, Russia would not represent a threat to Poland and Europe. If this scenario became reality, the Second Rzeczpospolita would get a valuable ally in the East and is fenced off from the aggressive Russia as a reliable “sanitary frontier” [Ishchuk, 2015].

However, other European States were so scared of the Russian revolution, that the idea of establishing near the borders of Bolshevik Russia in a chain of strong States captured the thoughts and there. A kind of barbed wire fence called this group of States the Minister of foreign Affairs of great Britain Lord George Curzon. A Italian Prime Minister Vittorio Orlando owns the term “sanitary frontier”, which later became a political turn.

Sorry, it should be stated that in the 20 years of the twentieth century, these ideas were not implemented. In the future, the Polish national Democrats rejected the idea of confederal ties of Poland with Belarus, Lithuania and Ukraine. On the contrary, they sought to share these territories with Russia and Polonized their share. Interwar Polish presence in “Kresy” left a sad memories that finally crossed a past. In the 30-ies of 20th century. Pilsudski pursued also not Pro-Ukrainian policy, guided only by the protection of national interests of Poland. In particular, the government of Poland, headed by Pilsudski pursued a policy of “pacification” of the Ukrainian population.

During the Second World War, the concept of an Alliance of countries located on the coasts of the Baltic, Black and Adriatic seas, revived the Polish General Wladyslaw Sikorski (Sikorski Władysław), which in 1942 initiated discussions between the Greek, Yugoslav and Czechoslovak governments in exile. Sikorski believed that post-war Central Europe should be politically ordered space of nation-States, United on the principle of Confederation. However, this concept was not approved by the anti-Hitlerallies, a Moscow it was considered in General as a threat.

Active supporters of the concept of “Promethea” were the known researchers Giedroyc, J. Mrozewski, Ch. Milos, J. Kuron, who supported the idea of active assistance to the enslaved peoples of Russia in gaining freedom and independence [Kuron, 2012:27].

Among Ukrainian scientists, who supported the idea “Intermarium” should be called Mykola Mikhnovskyi, Dmytro Dontsov, Stepan Rudnytsky, Mykhailo Hrushevskyi and other. If you analyze the key figures of early — mid 20th century, one of main among them is Mykola Mikhnovskyi, who in his work “Independent Ukraine” (1900 p.) defined the Ukraine as a naturally spatial reality, the boundaries of which coincide with the natural borders of the Ukrainian territory. Natural and political borders of the Carpathian Mountains to the Caucasus, the historical boundaries are delineated as the creation of the Ukrainian nation and state. On this basis, the main task of the Ukrainians in the twentieth century, in the author’s opinion, should be the restoration of the Ukrainian state destroyed due to military and political pressure of the Russian Empire and unification of all ethnic territories [Mikhnovskyi, 2002: 34].

More fundamental geopolitical issues investigated Dmytro Dontsov, who returned from exile, wrote two pamphlets: “the International position of Ukraine and Russia” (1918) and “the Ukrainian national idea in Europe” (1918). The activities of Dontsov quite thoroughly analyzed Ukrainian researcher A. Bagan, who noted that these works clearly showed geopolitical ideal of Ukrainian nationalism is to create a heavy-duty Ukrainian government over the Black sea with a continental international significance for the entire Europe [Bagan, 2015].

Dmytro Dontsov in his work *The International Position of Ukraine and Russia* called for the reconstruction of the geopolitical space of the middle and East Europe and categorically

stated: “the Federation of Russia with Ukraine — the same nonsense, as a Federation of England with Ireland, or Prussia, with Large Poland. Petersburg would not stand any, though only an Autonomous state of new formation in the most important ways to its expansion in Kiev. For the existence of the Ukrainian people should be destroyed again as it was destroyed on 27 June 1709 in the battle of Poltava” [Dontsov, 2012a: 27].

In the work *Ukrainian national idea in Europe* (1918) by Dmytro Dontsov, expressed a few thoughts about the long-term development of the Ukrainian state. First of all, he proceeded from the principles that the emergence of a strong Ukrainian state will be “an important factor of European equilibrium” [Dontsov, 2012a: 28], as will take advantage of Russia over Central Europe through its absolute domination over the plain space between the Dnieper and the Baltic sea, its dominance in the Northern black sea. In this form, that is, Ukraine is in a strong Alliance with the neighboring Middle Eastern powers from Estonia to Georgia, from Poland to Romania will be a reliable basis of stability and geopolitical balance in Europe. Actually, this is quite a lot of work has been devoted to the interpretation of this thesis in the historical dimension, Dontsov explained with examples from the past, how and why all of the previous decline in Ukraine led to the destabilization of the whole middle and East Europe, and how this was used by Russia to create its Empire-superpower and constantly threatening Europe.

In the book, *Foundations of our Policy* (1921) by Dmytro Dontsov clearly articulated the content and meaning of the victorious Ukrainian geopolitical ideas: “our eternal struggle against chaos in the East, the defense — in his own state and culture — the whole culture of the West, lies the Ukrainian national idea, which should be the basis of our entire political program. I really, from the fate of Ukraine in this struggle depended the victory of one of both principles on the continent: European or Moscow...” [Dontsov, 1957b: 28]. The thinker also wrote the axiom of the geopolitical establishment of Ukrainians: “Only the nation, conscious of the great tasks that must perform in the interests of the whole humanity, just like this nation is given special cell on the chessboard of world history. Only clear national ideal makes certain national idea crystalshine cell for individual and group wills within the nation, looking for other centers of gravity” [Dontsov, 1957b: 95]. In other words, the nation has a great future that will be able to fit their statist and welcome the aspirations in the global geopolitical aspirations of its macro-region and the whole continent.

In his opinion, such an organic macro-region of Ukraine there is a space of Central Europe, “from Adria to the Don and from the Baltic to the Mediterranean Sea.” Dmytro Dontsov explained: “As for the Serbs and Bulgarians until 1912 the struggle with Turkey, as the struggle with Russia is our collective ideal. It is dictated to us by our historical traditions, our geographical position and special historical role that we are destined to play” [Dontsov, 1957b: 95].

Another Ukrainian researcher Stepan Rudnytsky in *A Brief Geography of Ukraine* as regards the Black sea from the point of view of the geopolitical orientations of Ukraine. He notes the specifics of the geographical situation of our country, which has a wide outlet to the Black sea, which in turn is connected by the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles with the Mediterranean and further with Asia Minor and Africa. In another work, *The Ukrainian Case from the position of political geography* Rudnytsky explained the significance of the Black sea for the development of our country in the historical context and outlined the possible scenarios of Ukraine’s development, in anticipation of the establishment of communication through naval channels between the Black, Baltic sea and Caspian sea [Pudnitsky, 1914a: 95].

A well-known researcher Stepan Tomaszewski also noted the dependence of Ukraine from the Black sea, which played a significant role in its history. Perceiving Ukraine as a

geographical concept, he focused on the historical consequences of its location in the heart of Europe, which led to a constant struggle of other countries in its territory and its inextricable link with the Black sea. He wrote: “Only in the geographical sense, we can speak of Ukraine as an individual constant concept throughout history. A large part of Ukraine, and some part of Eastern Europe, was connected to your water chain with the Black sea and is forced to share his fate” [Tomaszewski, 1919: 95].

The idea of the black sea orientation actively supported Mykhailo Hrushevsky, who in his work *On the threshold of a New Ukraine* developed geopolitical doctrine for Ukraine, highlighting the axis North-South. He noted: “the Historical conditions of life oriented Ukraine to the West, a geographical oriented and oriented to the South, on the Black sea. The Black sea is not shared, a linked coastal region” [Hrushevsky, 1991a: 148]. Hrushevsky understood the objective of the civilizational belonging of Ukraine to the West, called to focus on Western countries. However, he stressed: “But when the school should be the land of the Western culture, our field of activities, our own creativity should be the lands, which like Ukraine, are inspired by the influences or connections of the Eastern culture — in the Black sea orientation, combined Black sea” [Hrushevsky, 1991:148].

This issue was also considered by the government of the Ukrainian people’s Republic. While in exile, the government of the UPR carried out the preparatory work on creation of a black sea Union. He was supposed to promote “economic revival of Eastern Europe, active political and economic relations with Western Europe.” Members of this Alliance was to become the Ukrainian national Republic, the Kuban, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Before and during the Second World War these ideas were developed by representatives of the Ukrainian political emigration. So, J. Lypa in his book *The Appointment of Ukraine* (1938), noting the originality and uniqueness of Ukrainians as an independent nation, their purpose to be free and happy, focuses on the geopolitical orientation of Ukraine South-North. He writes: “Only the axis South-North is the axis of Ukrainian lands. Defenses of the axis North-South is the most important task of history of Ukraine” [Lipa, 1992: 236]. He believed in the stabilizing role of the axis built by him in world politics. Yu. Lypa in the section “Union Black Sea States” elaborated on his vision of geopolitics from the point of view of the situation in the Black sea outlined the role of each of the black sea countries, highlighting the role of Kemal Ataturk, when it was about Turkey. Of course, in the Soviet totalitarian system these ideas could not be realized.

Only after the Declaration in 1991, p. Ukraine’s independence has entered a new phase of discussion and implementation of these ideas. So, in 1992, after the overthrow of communism in Poland (1989) and USSR (1991), the idea of “Intermarium” was implemented as an official geopolitical concept at the IV Congress of the Confederation of Independent Poland (KPN) — the party of the national liberation orientation, which was founded in 1979 in Warsaw. In 1993, p. the Ukrainian Institute of society transformation began to research potential opportunities and benefits of the Baltic-Black Sea partnership. In July 1994, in Kyiv, an agreement was signed between the 15 parties in six countries (Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, Latvia and Estonia).

About the need for a Baltic-black sea cooperation involving Ukraine, said former President of Lithuania Algirdas Brazauskas at the summit of 1997 p. in Vilnius. It was during the presidency of this country in the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) consensus regarding the participation of third parties, in particular Ukraine, in activities of the organization. The closest to such a project in the framework of international cooperation was the so-called project

of the Caspian-black sea-Baltic energy transit space (CBBS), which was treated in 2007-2008 on the initiative of then presidents of Ukraine and Poland Viktor Yushchenko and Lech Kaczynski. He was supported by all the Baltic countries, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Expressed interest in Turkey, Romania and the EC. Unfortunately, the project failed to implement. These initiatives gradually slowed down in the time of Yanukovych, and Ukraine is once again facing the dilemma: East or West, a gray zone between them.

Recently, the interest in these ideas has increased significantly. It should be noted that during the 70th session of the UN General Assembly held the first meeting of the countries of the region, Adriatic, Baltic and Black seas. The idea of “Intermarium” was discussed during the meeting Polish President Andrzej Duda with Petro Poroshenko at the international summit of the countries of the European Union. These ideas were also supported by the Polish ex-President Lech Kaczynski, who in 2008 advocated the creation of a coalition of Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia for political support of Georgia in terms of military aggression from Russia. Famous Polish activists Giedroyc, Yuliush Mrozewski and Ukrainian historian and writer Bohdan Osadchuk in the pages of the iconic Parisian magazine “Kultura” had also proved the importance of Poland’s support of Ukraine’s independence and creating a strong bond between them.

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